

[Mrs. C. A. Fruide]

[S241-LA DUP?]

FORM A Circumstances of Interview.

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W, Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE October 31, 1938. SUBJECT Folklore

1. Home and address of informant. Mrs. C.A. Fruide, 885 No, 25th St.

2. Date and time of interview. Oct. 31, 8 am. to 10:30 a.m.

3. Place of interview. 885 No. 25th St.

4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant

None.

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you. None.

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. Has nice home which is newly modernized. Has apartment built on to home.

FORM B Personal History of Informants.

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman. ADDRESS 2438 W. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE Oct. 31, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT. Mrs. C.A. Fruide. 885 No. 25th St.

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1. Ancestry. Scotch-Irish
2. Place and date of birth. Indians, Warsaw 1867.
3. Family.
4. Place lived in, with dates. Indiana, Came to Nebraska 1872.
5. Education, with dates. Grade school.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates. Married 50 years. Husband recently died.
7. Special skills and interests. Takes care of roomers, boarders.
8. Community and religious activities. Believes in spiritualism.
9. Description of informant. Old but very nervous and active.
10. Other points gained in interview. None.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER. George Hartman. ADDRESS 2438 W. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE Oct. 31, 1938. SUBJECT Folklore.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT. Mrs. Claude Fruide, 885 W. 25th Lincoln, Nebr.

We came to Nebraska in August of 1872. We came with a large wagon train or caravan. I was five years of age then. We came and settled at Polk, Nebraska. [????]

We built our sod house. They had a plow that cut the sod and molded it about twelve inches wide. The men called the plow, "Grasshopper," because it hopped along the ground

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as it cut. The sod was laid up like brick with the grass down and hanging over. Trees were hauled from the Platte river where they were used for support for the roof. The grass between the sod bricks would act something like cement and hold the sod together.

In those days the crops were large and everything was plentiful except when the grasshoppers would come and eat everything. I have seen melons as large as salt barrels. In fact, they were so large that after they were cut in half I could then hide inside of one of them.

The Indians in those days would wear two blankets wrapped around themselves and would of been naked outside of that. They would come to your house and walk around it twice and then come right in without knocking and say "how." They would motion what they wanted. Either it would be something to eat or to get warm by your fire. Sometimes they would pretend like they were ignorant of what you said even though they did understand 2 what you said. They would come in and take some leaves out of their clothes which they would roll up and tear. They would then put the leaves in a long pipe and drawing a coal out of the fire, light it and start smoking away. Another of the Indians would grab it from the other Indians and start smoking it himself, he might give the other Indian a mean look but would not do any more. After my father would feed them and let them get warm he said "Pokachee" which meant in [indian Indian ?] "get out." The [indians Indians ?] would paint their faces with berry juice and what made their faces so yellow was the fact that they would get that way from the smoke inside of the wigwams.

In the great storm of April 1873, in which much livestock was frozen to death, I have seen [indians Indians ?] go around and get the hogs that were frozen to death, and then eat them. Of course, white people did not do this.

I can remember of looking out at the rolling grass of the prairies and how it would make one seasick to look at it because it looked exactly like water and then again you could see mirages in it.

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The people would homestead in four quarters so that they could build a well in the center of the four quarters and all partake in using the well. There would be a man who would go around with an auger which he would dig or bore the well for the settlers. One day a puppy fell in the well and he was retrieved after much difficulty by the use of a fish fork.

I think that Arborville is now a "Ghost town" as there is no postoffice there now and no buildings.

I have seen a buffalo that got lost wander into a herd of cows. The old timers claim that irrigation has stopped rainfall and caused the drouths to come.

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People used to call a sweater a "wampus." Later it was, and still is, called a "lumber jack." Stocking caps were called "gogler."

Central City, Nebraska used to be called "Lone tree," because there was a lone large tree standing in the town. The tree was just recently cut down.

Once a little boy was lost in our vicinity. The neighbors being alarmed rode horseback and blew horns to scare all wolves away from the vicinity. The boy wandered and fell asleep in some tall grass. When he was found the next morning by his father, he said, "Daddy, I'm hungry."

One time all of the [indians Indians ?] in our vicinity got the measles. There were some white people who were mad at the [indians Indians ?] told them to jump in the river and they would get well. The [indians Indians ?] who had the measles jumped in the river and the cold water coupled with the fact that they had the measles, killed them.

The wild roses in that day were very thick. They had red berries on them larger than your thumb. The berries were good to eat and tasted like a banana. Buffalo Peas grew near the vicinity of "Buffalo wallers" as they were called. The peas grew larger than a bushel

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baskets. The buffalos would wallow in the mud so that the flies would not bother them. After the buffalos would tramp and wallow on some land, the grass would change and be known as buffalo grass. This grass was much finer than other grass that came up previous to the time the buffalos would wallow.

Another weed that is not plentiful anymore is Rosin weed.

The people used to stack the prairie hay so thick that it would have to cut with long knives. The grass was very long and this made it pack hard. It was used for feeding but it was not good as other hay.

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The cyclone of 1907 hit Polk and all but destroyed the whole town. It lifted buildings up and set them at other places. I saw chickens that were plucked clean of all of their feathers from the cyclone. A tub that was wound around a tree; a man's car that was literally torn off as he was running down in to his cellar and his horse that followed him and fell right into the caller with him. Also a large two by four that was shoved right through a house. I saw a side of a house that was blown three blocks away without breaking a window.

Dr. George used to be a doctor at Lincoln and would go to Stromsburg and conduct spiritualistic meetings along with his practice. There was a certain house in that town where a woman disappeared. An outsider, a man who had just come to Stromsburg told him that the house was haunted and to go down there if he dared. The doctor said he would, so went down. In the meantime, two men slipped down before him and hid in the house. The doctor came to the house and those men made noises and scared the doctor so badly he ran all of the way back to the hotel as fast as he could go.

Two bachelors named George and Horace Putnam came to Polk from Ohio and settled eight miles west of Stromsburg. Each brother took a homestead and together they built a

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house. They built the house diagonally so that it would touch each other's land. Their beds were arranged so that they slept on each one's land.

They tell the following story about an old empty house that an old woman a year or two before had vacated. One day these brothers went to this house and tried to get in. They found that the door was latched from the inside. One of the brothers noticed that there were a string of bees that were buzzing in and out of a small hole in the door. The brothers finally broke the door down and were surprised to find the 18 by 20 sod house filled solid with honey. Altogether they claimed twenty tons of honey which they shipped to Omaha and got a good price for.

Another man told the story about the time he went to see his girl. He had to cross a creek and taking his boots off he waded across. He was surprised to find that he didn't even get his feet wet. The explanation was that the socks were so heavy and finely knit so as to make them water proof or maybe it was just dried dirt.